

BOOK REVIEWS

RADICAL SURGERY IN ADVANCED ABDOMINAL CANCER. By Alexander Brunschwig, M.D., Professor of Surgery, University of Chicago. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago. Price \$7.50.

This is a very interesting book covering case reports of one hundred advanced abdominal malignancies. The book is well illustrated and every page of printed matter is of extreme value. Many important points are stressed, such as, "In malignant conditions the basal metabolism rate may be elevated," "Co-incidental conditions such as cardiovascular pathology are not necessarily contra-indications to operation," "The present knowledge of the etiology, prevention and treatment of shock made extensive operation procedure less hazardous," "Glisson's capsule is a barrier to direct extension of carcinoma," "Many nodules in the liver are not necessarily metastatic carcinoma; many are fibromas, scerous angiomas or cysts."

The first chapter deals very effectively with the historical resume of the important advances in abdominal surgery.

The chapter on supportive treatment is brief and to the point.

This book may be used as a reference book for surgeons undertaking extensive surgery for the relief of abdominal malignancy. The technique of gastric resection and other extensive resections in the abdomen is covered thoroughly and the important points and dangers are well stressed. The necessity of teamwork, not only of the medical group but the groups treating shock, and the importance of multiple transfusion are covered in a very practical way.

The reviewer's only criticism of the book is of the title. The word "radical" these days has so many implications that it would seem to be much more appropriate to have some such title as "Extensive Surgery in Abdominal Cancer." This book is recommended to any surgeon doing abdominal resection, but many of the points stressed are helpful to those performing the ordinary surgery in the abdominal cavity.

One point which was not stressed in the book which undoubtedly will be covered in the next edition is the use of gelatin foam in the control of hemorrhage.

* * *

X-RAY DIFFRACTION STUDIES IN BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE. By Mona Spiegel-Adolf, M.D., Professor of Colloid Chemistry and Head of the Department of Colloid Chemistry, Temple University School of Medicine, and George C. Henny, M.S., M.D., Professor of Medical Physics and Head of the Department of Physics, Temple University School of Medicine. Published 1947. Grune & Stratton, Inc., New York City. Price \$5.50.

This monograph of some 250 pages is an excellent summary of recent progress in biological research with x-ray diffraction equipment. The authors are attached to Temple University School of Medicine. After fairly brief introductory chapters on the theory and technique of x-ray diffraction,

there are adequate sections on the interpretation of diffraction patterns, and summaries of diffraction studies on the following materials: carbohydrates, amino-acids, proteins, muscle, fats, nerves and various skeletal structures. There is a list of references and a subject index.

There are 86 illustrations, most of them with excellent legends. The book is printed on excellent quality paper and has a very attractive cover. It can be recommended to students of molecular research, and to all biological workers who use or might use x-ray diffraction technique in molecular analysis.

* * *

MODERN DERMATOLOGY AND SYPHILOLOGY. By S. William Becker, M.D., Clinical Professor of Dermatology, University of Chicago, and Maximilian E. Obermayer, M.D., Clinical Professor and Chairman of the Department of Dermatology, University of Southern California. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia. 1947. Price \$18.00.

This book of 983 pages is a second edition, the original text having been published in 1940. The present edition is beautifully bound on glazed heavy paper which makes the book rather large and heavy. The subject matter, however, is presented in a clear-cut and concise manner.

The subjects to be discussed in each chapter are listed in outline form. Each chapter begins with an introductory discussion of the subject matter contained in the chapter. The authors term this "orientation" in which they give a brief explanation for including the diseases under discussion under one heading. This "orientation" includes the personal views of the authors and is very valuable for teaching purposes. The arrangement of the book is excellent throughout and can be recommended as a guide for the presentation of a course in dermatology for undergraduate students.

A careful perusal of its pages indicates that much of the material used emanates from the authors' own investigative work and clinical experience. The current literature on dermatology and syphilology is well covered up to 1945. Special articles pertaining to the subject presented in each chapter are listed at the end of the chapter. No attempt is made to give a complete bibliography.

Errors in spelling and wording were not observed although in Chapter 30 the term Mycosis Fungoides is obviously mistakenly used for the word "orientation."

Many of the chapters are excellent, especially those dealing with industrial dermatoses, dermatologic allergy, neurodermatitis, disturbances of pigmentation, diseases due to fungi, filterable viruses, insects, leprosy, and many others.

From the standpoint of postgraduate teaching the book has many of the faults to which textbooks are subject in general. It is no longer modern in a true sense by the time the work of assembling the subject matter for printing has been completed. An example of this is found in the chapter dealing with urticaria which, though very well done, makes

no mention of the use of benadryl nor pyribenzamine in the treatment of urticaria.

Sufficient place is not given in the book for a discussion of the histopathology of skin diseases. An increase in the number and quality of microphotographs would add to the value of such discussions. A chapter on x-ray and radium therapy also seems desirable.

The authors indicate that their book is designed mainly as a textbook for undergraduate students and as a practical aid for the general practitioner. Both of these aims are admirably accomplished.

* * *

PROGRESS IN GYNECOLOGY. Edited by Joe V. Meigs, M.D., Clinical Professor of Gynecology, Harvard Medical School; Chief of the Vincent Memorial Hospital, the Gynecological Service of the Massachusetts General Hospital; Surgeon, Pondville Hospital; Gynecologist, Palmer Memorial Hospital, and Somers H. Sturgis, M.D., Chief, the Vincent Memorial Hospital Laboratory; Assistant Surgeon, Massachusetts General Hospital. Grune & Stratton, Inc., New York. 1946. Price \$7.50.

The book reviewer is in a unique position, in that he is expected not only to be appreciative, but the public also expects him to be discriminatory. This review will attempt to fulfill both of these responsibilities.

First off, one can say of the volume entitled "Progress in Gynecology" that it is well conceived. There is a real need for such a volume, and we hope that it may reappear at appropriate intervals. For the sake of those who are interested in the woman as a whole, which all gynecologists should be, one could wish that the childbearing function with its special features and interests could have been reflected in the title and the content. Gynecology can no longer neglect reproduction. To do so is to consider the plant only and not its real function, which is equally to perpetuate. But such omissions are characteristic of a few centers of learning, and this volume, fine as it is, goes along with an outmoded trend. True, there are fine chapters on infertility and sterility as well as habitual abortion, but these are the characteristic American gynecologist's obeisance to necessary office practice, which inevitably involves pregnancy. One wonders when we will be able to train men to be equally wise and interested in reproduction as well as in the non-reproductive functions of the adult woman.

Having engaged in these animadversions, some of which are admittedly philosophical, we should turn to a consideration of the virtues of this fine volume.

In the first place, each section is written by a person well equipped to express an opinion upon the subject concerned. As this is in essence a progress report, one must tolerate brevity, which is evident in each chapter. This characteristic makes it valuable from the point of view of conversant gynecologists, as well as those well read general surgeons who may thumb its pages, and we hope there may be many.

After careful appraisal one may admit that perhaps this is a unique volume, in that even with its brief consideration of a strictly gynecological sphere, it not only covers recent progress, but it

also ties in familiarly with the past. In other words, it is a progress report, but it is also a connecting link. In this achievement its editors are to be congratulated, for this is really good teaching.

It would be a mistake to analyze too closely, because the various chapters have been written by different individuals, some of whom have gone into considerable helpful detail while others have sketched a brief outline. This latter statement is so true that it may be that brevity has been considered to be too much of a virtue. However, it must be admitted that after careful perusal of many of the sections one cannot but wonder why the author could not have been more candid and have stated more clearly what he thought with regard to vaginal prolapse, or cervicitis, or lymphadenectomy, and so on.

From the foregoing it is clear that the reviewer is beset by mixed emotions, that he considers this innovation in gynecological literature an interesting and valuable contribution, but is lost in wondering just what group in the medical profession is to be profited most by its perusal. The general idea is admirable, and many sections are helpful—but others are not so useful. It may be that this is to be expected of a progress report. In all fairness we must say that this contribution is worthy of mature consideration. It will meet the needs of many who are seeking gynecological support.

* * *

PENICILLIN IN SYPHILIS. By Dr. J. Earle Moore, Associate Professor of Medicine and Adjunct Professor of Public Health Administration, The Johns Hopkins University; Physician-in-Charge Syphilis Division of the Medical Clinic and Visiting Physician, The Johns Hopkins Hospital; Chairman, Syphilis Study Section, National Institute of Health, United States Public Health Service; Chairman, Subcommittee on Venereal Diseases, National Research Council. Published February 1, 1947, by Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Illinois. Price \$5.00.

This is the first book to appear in which the special problems of antisyphilitic therapy are considered in detail in relation to penicillin. It is very much worth while, as it comes at a time when the general literature is extremely confusing. Dr. Moore presents the subject clearly and concisely, and one is amazed that he is able to fill 300 pages without the inclusion of any irrelevant material. The result is a clear and logical analysis of the position that penicillin holds in antisyphilitic therapy today with predictions as to the probable direction of future investigation.

Nearly half the book is devoted to the chemistry and pharmacology of penicillin and the results of its use in experimental syphilis in animals. One should not pass over this part of the book to get at the clinical material, for to do so is to miss a number of facts that make some of the curious results of treatment in human syphilis more or less comprehensible.

The greater part of the clinical section is devoted to the use of penicillin in early syphilis and in neurosyphilis, since it has been used extensively and critically only in these stages of the disease. The most complete and systematic investigation of the results of penicillin therapy has been in connection with early syphilis. In spite of grave difficulties